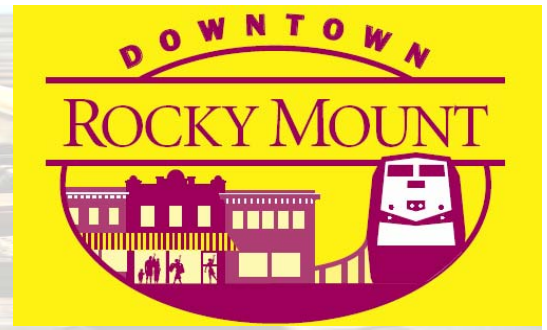


# The Ties That Bind

Winter 2006 Volume 1, Issue 2



## Downtown Rocky Mount Area Merchant's Association

The **Downtown Rocky Mount Area Merchant's Association** held their annual board meeting on January 17, 2006. Members present presented nominations for Officers and then held a general election. Following are the positions which were voted on and the members elected to fill them:

President: Michael Cook- Tyson's Upholstery  
Vice Pres.: Dee Warren- Moore's Bike Shop  
Treasurer: Virginia Davis- Virginia's  
Secretary: Melanie Wilder- Davis Furniture

The next meeting of the Merchant's Association will be: 21 Feb 2006 at 126 NW Main Street (Winstead Electronics) at 6:00 PM.

### New Downtown Businesses:

**Carriage House Curiosity Shop,**  
116/118 SW Main Street  
Eva Whitaker and Carl McArthur,  
owners

**Taste of Paradise Restaurant,**  
103 Marigold Street  
Yolanda Evans , owner

**Joanne's Foxy Boutique,**  
155/157 SE Main Street  
Nan Arrington-Jones, CEO

**NOW OPEN**



General Information/Tickets: 972-1266

Arts Center: 972-1163

Children's Museum/Science Center: 972-1167

### Hours of Operation

Monday: Closed

Tuesday/Wednesday/Saturday: 10am-5pm

Thursday/Friday: 10am-9pm

Sunday: 1pm-5pm

### Admission

Arts Center- Free

Children's Museum/Science Center

Adults: \$4.00

Children ages 3-15: \$3.00

Senior Citizen ages 60 and above: \$3.00

Free to the public Wednesday 2pm-5pm

### Planetarium Opens March 1, 2006

All ages: \$3.50

### Available Properties

**For Sale.** 118 NW Main Street. 11' X 64' one-story commercial building that backs onto Sorsby's Aly. Contact Roscoe Speight at 442-4251.

**For Rent.** Historically renovated offices at the People's Bank Building at Main and Tarboro Streets. Available April, 2006. Contact Ben Grinnell at (919) 956-4423.

### **Downtown is Subject of ECU and UNC Spring Projects**

Following successes of previous student projects, including; NC A&T's Landscape Design in 2003 and ECU's Interior Designs for buildings on the Douglas Block in the Fall of 2005, the Office of Downtown Development is working with two other student groups this Spring 2006 semester.

Four students from the Kenan-Flagler Business School at University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill are working on a market study that will result in marketing material that can be used as an information resource to investors. Their study will assess the current economic situation in the Downtown, incorporating public and private planned improvements and investment and overall market trends to assess potential opportunities for growth.

East Carolina University interior design students have split into three groups, each focusing on a grouping of downtown properties. Their work for the client, the Downtown Development Office, is to create interior designs of the existing properties. Deliverables to the client include color renderings, elevation drawings and 3-D models, among others. The properties being studied are the old Low's Building at 125 NE Main Street, 119,121 and 125 SE Main Street and 152-4 and 158 SW Main Street. In addition to the design work being performed, another group of ECU students will be brought in to do merchandising for the subject properties. If the work done by ECU interior design students last semester on the Douglas Block is any indication of the quality if these student's work- we are in for another treat. Stay tuned for a public presentation of this work to take place in late April.

Student projects such as these are refreshing in that many of the preconceived notions that others may have about the area and its redevelopment do not exist and accordingly they offer a clear and vibrant perspective.

### **New 2005 Holiday Lighting Program**

This past holiday season there were snowflakes on Main Street every night! Using funding from Rocky Mount Travel & Tourism, the City's Office of Downtown Development in conjunction with downtown stakeholder groups installed theatrical lights that bathed numerous Main Street Buildings in snowflake images. The images were visible each night from 5-11PM on Main Street building facades from Thomas Street to Nash Street on both sides of the tracks. Besides eighteen different snowflake groupings, there are three other images; Rocky Mount Travel & Tourism's "Remarkable Rocky Mount" Logo, the new Downtown Rocky Mount logo and the Downtown Rocky Mount slogan "Main Street on Track."

The images highlighted one of the city's greatest assets- the historic fabric of the Main Street buildings. Buildings were illuminated by 750 Watt theatrical lights that were staged from a second story building- across the train tracks. The People's Bank Building was illuminated with snowflakes on both the Main Street and Tarboro Street sides. These festive holiday images were showcased in a brief ceremony and walk on Main Street on Thursday, December 15<sup>th</sup> at 6PM and a Telegram article on December 22nd.



### **Downtown Loan Pool**

The Downtown Loan Pool has closed on its first loan and is reviewing two new applications for building rehabilitations on Main Street. The fund was established in 2005 by a consortium of six local banks, the NC Bankers Association and the City of Rocky Mount. The pool, which started as \$2.4 Million, can be used for acquisition and rehabilitation of properties in the primary focus area of Downtown Rocky Mount. Loans are given at prime and payments are interest-only during construction and pre-occupancy (up to three years.) Applications are available and are to be submitted to the Office of Downtown Development. This program is proving itself an important tool for investors in "bridging the gap" in building renovations. For more information, contact Ian Kipp.

## THE TIES THAT BIND

**The following is a letter to the editor which ran in the News and Observer on 1/29/06:**

### Rocky Mount High

On Jan. 21, with the opening of the new Imperial Centre for the Arts and Sciences at Rocky Mount, the state's cultural geographic center shifted more to the east. Your Jan. 22 article did not come close to conveying the vastness or the significance of this project. There is no other cultural facility in this state that can touch it with respect to scope.

In a single complex, a former tobacco factory, are housed six large art galleries - more exhibition space than the Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art has in Winston-Salem. There is a 56-seat state-of-the-art planetarium featuring electronic and projection equipment unrivaled in the Southeast and a 300-seat dramatic theater that mirrors our own Fletcher Opera Theater in Raleigh. There is a children's museum and an art education center for classes in painting, dance, fiber, ceramics and music. A huge new central public library completes the cultural complex.

There is space for a future restaurant as well as expansive interconnecting public spaces, both indoors and out, for sculpture installations, concerts and public functions.

The only facility in North Carolina that comes close to the Imperial Centre is the Greensboro Cultural Center, but Rocky Mount's is larger. And it's in a town of 55,000 people! I laud longtime Mayor Fred Turnage, City Manager Steve Raper, Assistant City Manager Peter Varney and the Rocky Mount City Council for their dogged persistence. And my hat is off to Jerry Jackson, the city's cultural director.

Watch out, North Carolina, Rocky Mount is now a player.

**Lee Hansley**

Raleigh

*The writer is a Raleigh art gallery owner and former chairman of the Raleigh Arts Commission.*

### Quick Fact

Window openings are an important characteristic of historic buildings. At the street level, windows function as the primary marketing tool for a commercial establishment.

### Request for Proposals (RFP)

#### Downtown Streetscape Design

In early February, the City will be releasing a Request For Proposals (RFP) for the downtown's Urban Streetscape Plan. It is expected that a multi-disciplinary firm, or partnership of firms, that specialize in urban design, land use planning, traffic engineering, roadway design and landscape architect, will submit proposals for the project. The firm chosen by the city will design downtown streetscape improvements including streets, sidewalks, lampposts street furniture, etc. Funding for this project will come from a \$4 million dollar Federal grant and a \$1 million local match over 6 years. Bids for this project will be due in mid-March.

Stay tuned as this exciting project kicks off!

**Be a part of Downtown Rocky Mount  
Revitalization by shopping with your  
local merchants.**



Telephone (252) 972-1267  
Fax (252) 972-1173  
Website: [www.ci.rocky-mount.nc.us](http://www.ci.rocky-mount.nc.us)  
Email: [kipp@ci.rockymountnc.us](mailto:kipp@ci.rockymountnc.us)

**Ian Kipp**  
*Downtown Development Manager*

331 South Franklin Street • P.O. Box 1180 • Rocky Mount, NC 27802-1180

**City of Rocky Mount  
Downtown Development Office  
331 S. Franklin St., Rocky Mount, NC 27802-1180  
Phone: 252-972-1267 Fax: 252-972-1173  
Email: [downtown@ci.rocky-mount.nc.us](mailto:downtown@ci.rocky-mount.nc.us)  
Downtown Development Website:  
<http://www.ci.rockymount.nc.us/downtown>**

**Who benefits from a Revitalized Commercial District?**

<b>Stakeholders</b>	<b>Benefits</b>
Merchants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greater opportunity for growth and expansion</li> <li>• Expanded customer base</li> <li>• Less financial risk</li> </ul>
Property Owners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stable or higher rents</li> <li>• Increased occupancy rates</li> <li>• Improved marketability of property</li> <li>• Higher property values</li> </ul>
Financial Institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expanded business customer base</li> <li>• Expanded residential customer base</li> <li>• Improved public image and goodwill</li> <li>• Fulfillment of community reinvestment mandate</li> </ul>
Professionals and Service Businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ready-made customer base of district employees</li> <li>• Locations near government, banks, post office and other institutions</li> <li>• Nearby amenities for clients and staff</li> </ul>
Chamber of Commerce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential new member businesses</li> <li>• Healthier overall business climate</li> <li>• Potential partnerships on joint projects</li> </ul>
Residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local accessibility to goods and services</li> <li>• Opportunities for volunteerism and leadership development</li> <li>• Preservation of community for future generations</li> <li>• More employment opportunities</li> <li>• Stronger tax base to support other community aspects (schools, parks. Etc.)</li> </ul>
Local Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased sales and property tax base</li> <li>• Protection of property values and infrastructure investments</li> <li>• Reduced cost of services, such as police and fire protection</li> <li>• Reduced pressure for sprawl development</li> </ul>
Community Partners (CDC's, BIDs, civic clubs, historical societies, historic preservation organizations, religious institutions, senior citizens, arts groups, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved quality of life in the community</li> <li>• New membership potential among new residents</li> <li>• Achievement of common goals</li> <li>• Preservations of community history</li> </ul>
Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youth involvement in civic projects</li> <li>• Use of commercial district as "classroom" for school</li> <li>• Potential employment and business opportunities</li> <li>• More places to go and activities for youths</li> </ul>
Business Outside the Commercial District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased visitor traffic to the community</li> <li>• Improved municipal services throughout community</li> <li>• Increased business from overall healthier economy</li> <li>• Additional amenities for employees and clients</li> </ul>
Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved quality of life makes recruiting and retaining employees easier.</li> </ul>